



Here foloweth

the boke of Solomō
called Ecclesiastes /
(which is to say in
Englishe / a pre-
cher) .



The sermons of Solomon
sonne of Dauid/ kynge
of Jerusalem.

All thynges at all tyme are
subiect vnto vanite (saith
this precher) ther is nothyng els
but very vanytie. What els get-
teth man of all thyng? vnder the
sonne (laboure he neuer so sore)
but vanite. One age goth and a
nother cometh/ but the erth aby-
deth styll. The sonne ryseth and
goth downe/ returning vnto his
place to rise agayne. Nowe blow-
eth the wynde agaynst y south
and anon it returneth agaynst y
north / thus turnyng cōtynually
about agayn vnto y place where
it began. All ryuers conne in to
the see/ & yet riseth it nat so hygh
as to passe her bownes/ but she

A. ii.

sens

sendeth them backe agayne to re-
tourne into her. All thynges for
their vnstable mutabylte are to
harde & high for mānes capacitye
for as nothig can satisfie the eye/
so desyreth the care euermore to
here. What thing hath ther ben/
but a like succedeth & is to come:
ye/ what thing hath ther bē done
but a lyke is & shal be/so y under
the sonne is ther nothing newe.

Is there any thinge of whiche
it may be sayd. No/this is newe/
No verely. For it hath ben befor
tyme: & as thynges passe growe
out of mīde with vs: so shal thin-
ges present be forgotten with thē
that folow vs. I my self beyng a
precher/ & kynge ouer Israel abi-
dyng in Ierusalem: endeuoured
my selfe delygētly & wysely to en-
serche the knowlege of euery thi-
ge

ge vnder the sonne. But lordē /
how heuy & tedious is this stu-
dy/ which god hath gūē to mor-
tall men thus to wery thē selues
in so serchyngē: But yet I consy-
dered al thinges made vnder he-
uen: & lo/ I could espye nothig e-
ls/ but that all was but vanite &
mysery. The croked can nat be
made right / nor the faulte that
dayly slyppe away can nat be nō-
bred. Thā thus thought I with
my self: Se / I am clere & mygh-
ty/ excellyng of all men in wyses-
dom that were euer before me in
Ierusalem: I haue promoted &
encreased the study of wysedome
& knowlege of all thynges: I ga-
ue my selfe hole by longe experi-
ence to get wysedom/ and also to
know the mad folyshnes of mē.
But this myn enforcemēt I felte
it to

it to be no nother thā a miserable labour & laborous turnētyng of my mynde: For where is moche wisdom/ there is as moch affliction & trouble/ & who so contendeth to haue experyence & knowledge of many thinges / he wrappeth him selfe in moche labour & heuyneſſe.

Cap. ii.

Wherfore I thouzt thus w^t my self sayēg: Well I ſhal take me to more eaſe & pleaſure/ to laugh & be merry. But lo/ all this was eyn alſo very vanite. & I tolde laughter/ thou makeſt mē madde I ſaid vnto ſporte & mirth: what doſt thou: art thou mad to: And here thā I decreed w^t my ſelfe to w^d draw my fleſhe frō wyne/ & to ſet my herte ſo wiſely to optayne prudence/ that I myght alſo en-
ſtrute

ſtrute and lerne other what they ſhulde do/ & ſhew thē what is gode & profitable as lōge as they lyue. I attempted alſo to bringe about many/ both noble & gret thinges: I buylded coſtely houſes/ & plāted vyne yardes / I made me gardēs as ſwete as paradyſe/ ſet with all maner fruitful trees/ & cōuaied my cundyte/ with water to myniſtre moiſtenes vnto euery yōg tre. I had ſeruātes/ hādmaydens/ & a gret famely. I had gretter herd/ of beſtes & ſhepe thā all y^e wer befor me i Jeruſalē. I had gathered me golde & ſyluer/ with oth^r treaſure as beſemed any kīg what ſo euer he were. Thā did I ordeyne me ſyngers & dauncers both men & womē/ whō to here & beholde was gret pleaſure/ of whō ſome were my cup berers: ſo that
there

there was neuer none lyke me in
 Ierusalem: natwithstādyng yet
 dyd wysedome abyde styll with
 me: And what so euer my eyes de
 syred/ they had it: Neither dyd
 I nat withdraue my hert to any
 pleasure/ but dyd recreate my sel
 fe in euery labour. And this plea
 saunt frute me thought my selfe
 well worthy for my trauell. But
 after this at laste began I to cō
 syder & expende all my dedes: &
 lo/ al were very vanite & misery/
 & nothyng stable vnder the sōne.
 Thā I turned me to beholde my
 wysedome/ & I sawe it but mad
 nes & folishenes/ for what mā is
 there/ which can cōtrefayt & fol
 lowe that kynge which hath ma
 de hi: And here I spyed as gret
 differēce betwixt very wysedome
 and folishenes/as betwixt light
 and

and darkenes/ & that for bycause
 the wisemānes eye stādeth in his
 heed/ & the fole gropeth in derke
 nes. And ouer this yet I percey
 ued that in the meane season one
 gothe his waye lyke the tother.
 And than I thought: Sith it ha
 pen to me euen as it doth to the
 fole: wherfore contēde I with so
 great studye to be wyse: And yet
 euen here perceyued I the same
 thought to be but vanite: For as
 sone is the wyse forgotten as the
 fole/sith althyng alyke by pcelle
 of tyme goth out of mynde: And
 as the iuste/ so dieth y fole. Wher
 fore it yzked me of my lyfe/ for no
 thyng vnder the sōne coude plea
 se me/ sith I perceyued it al to be
 but vanite / labour / & affliction.
 Thā did I abhorre al myn own
 laborous enforcemētes vnder y
 sonne:

sonne: for that I must be compelled to leue them to some mā that folowe me. For who knoweth y man to come whether he shall be wyse or a fole: And yet muste he be my heyze / & rule i my labours and goodes gotten wisclly vnder the sonne. And euy n all this yet was it but vanite. wherfore I determined playnely with my selfe to ccase from all study & traueyl offered me vnder the sonne: For a man / bring he his enforcements to passe with neuer so gret wysdome / prudence / and policy / yet muste he be compelled at laste to leaue the vnto an vnknowē heyze that neuer dyd sweate for them. And this is also but vanyte and carefull heuy nesse. For what els getteth man with all his sore study and wery traueyle aboute all thynges

thynges vnder the sonne / thā pat petuall dolour / heuy nesse / trauel and care of all his lyfe longe / so that nyght nor daye hathe he no quyet mynde: And euy n this / is also but vanyte. Is it nat than better for man to eat and drynke & recreat his mynde amōge these carful afflictions: for this cometh of the goodnes of god. who euer lyued more sūptuously & lyberally thā I: But herely whō god fauoureth / hi wyl he gyue wisdom prudence / knowlege / & gladnes. But vnto the sinner he giueth in fortune & care to gather & heap riches for him that pleaseh god / wherfore / euen this also is butte vanyte.

Al thynges accordynge to their tyme be subiect vnto muta

mutacion: And nothing vnder þe
 sonne is pmanent. For what so e-
 uer is now borne / it hath a tyme
 to dye. Nowe be thiges planted
 which at their tyme must be pluc-
 ked vp agayne. Now it is slaine
 which befoze we studyed to hele.
 Now it is destroyed / that befoze
 was buylded. Now we wepe / &
 anon we laugh. Now heuy / now
 we leap for ioye. We cast awaye
 stones / which anon we gather in
 agayne to buylde with all. Now
 at men giuen to loue in wedlock
 and anon they abhoze it. Nowe
 we seke / which and we lese. Now
 we kepe / which and we cast away
 Now we tere & ryppe / which be-
 foze we sewed togyther. There
 is a tyme to be styl / & tyme to spe-
 ke. Now we loue that we hated.
 Nowe we pclame batell agaisst
 them

them with whom we nourtshed
 peace. What pleasure may man
 haue in these so repugnant heuy
 labours. But hereof I pceyued /
 god to cast all these heuy heapes
 of affliction vpon mā / to bere &
 torment hi self with al. For what
 so euer god made / he dyd it good-
 ly in tyme and order / & so dyd he
 set it forth befoze the worlde also
 to be done / & euen the consydera-
 cion & creatiō of the worlde hath
 he engrauen in mānes herte: but
 yet neither the begynnyng nor en-
 de of þe workes of god can no mā
 enserche nor cōpise in his herte.
 Wherfoze I thought nothyng
 better in this worlde / than a mā
 to make mery & cheryshe him self
 whyle he lyueth. For to eate and
 drinke with a glad hert / amonge
 so many forowful labours / is the
 gyfte

gyft of god. For I know it verely that what soeuer god worketh it is fast perfyte & perpetuall/ neither may there any thinge be put to/ nor taken from his workes. which all/ god doth to declare himself to be reuerently feared. Things done dayly retourne agayn: and thinges that were to come be lately done. For the lord cōsydering the transitory state of all thinges restoreth the vs againe.ouer this yet I saw y^e scales of iuges/ in which there raigned vngodlynes/ for where iustyce shulde be ministered there dyd sit y^e wicked. And here than I thought wth myself: The lord is the very true iuge both of the iust and vngodly: For euery thought/ all counsels & werkes that euer were or shalbe/ shall be brought before him to be iuged

iuged at their tyme. Than after a lyke maner I cōsydered the careful state of man: how the lord exercyseth him in suche laborous misery/ that they appere nothing better than bestes/ for they haue both a lyke ende to dye: and a lyue they agre nat moche vnylike/ as one dieth/ so dyeth the tother: so that the chaunce of one semeth nat to be better than the tothers. & all is but vanite that chaunceth to them both/ & all at last come to one place: For as all came of dust so retourne they in to erth again. who can tell whether the spyryte of man ascēdeth vpwādes: and whether the breath of bestes go downwardes into the erth with their bodyes: Wherefore me thynketh it beste for man to be merye and glad in the myddes of thys myse

miserable state / for no parte els
shall he haue: & who shall bryng
him agayn to se what shal be he-
re done after him.

Cap. iiii.

And yet I tourned me a-
gayn to behold the iniust
oppzession of men in this worlde
& lo / I saw the teares of the op-
pressed w^t wronge / no mā nether
helpig nor cōfortig thē. For they
tyrannous oppzessours were of
suche myght that no man myght
resyst them: whiche thynge con-
sydered / I thought thē to be hap-
pyer and better at ease / whiche
be now ded / than them that yet
lyue. Ye / I iuged that man to be
happier than either of them both
whiche is yet vnborne / whiche
hath nat yet sene these manifolde
myscheues commytted vnder the
sonne.

sonne. Thā loke I vpon the la-
borous enformentes & vnweary
studyes of euery mā: & I percey-
ued al togyder full of enuye & de-
ceyte: which al is but very vani-
te & iner mysevy. And here / the
folyschmā abhorring al this clas-
ped his hādes together vntyll he
was constayned for his ydelnes
to eat his owne fleshe: thinkyng
nethles moche better to haue but
an handfull with rest / than both
his handes full with labour and
carfull calamite. Ouer this / I
turned me & behelde yet another
gret vanite in this world: I saw
men liuyng sole without chylde
or kyn / & yet neuer ceased they la-
bourig & trauelig day nor night /
no riches coulde satysfye their in-
satiablc eyes: no / they coulde ne-
uer thus thynke: Wherfore do I
thus

thus wery & weake my selfe : for
whom do I thus consume my self
with care : for whose pleasure &
pforte do I thus spare myn owne
goodes fro myn owne mouth I s
nat this very vanite & unhapp
heuy labour : It is better / it is
better therfore / two to lyue togy
der than one alone / that yet eche
may refresh the tother with the
frutes of theyr comune labour : &
especially / if one fal / yet y tother
felow helper may be redy at han
de to helpe hi vp again : If two
slepe togyder one shall warme &
nourishe the tother : for how may
one alone defende hym self fro the
iniuriousse colde : Also one alone
(if any wolde hurte hym) is sone
ouercome : but two togyder may
resyst . For a threweythed rope
is nat so sone broken . A poze yong
man

man y wylc is & pruden / is better
than an old dottysse ruler / that
folysse is and vncircumspecte . It
happeneth ofte that one crepeth
out of pryson to the kyngdome /
where agayne a nother borne to
be kyng / perissheth for pouertye .
And I saw a gret multytude vnder
the sonne / folowynge and des
pedyng of a nother yong man to
succeede his father in the kyngdom
euen as great a nombre as euer
folowed his father / some befoze
and some after : & yet was the fa
ther neuer so honourouse vnto the
as shall this his sonne be : to des
pyse therfore a nother kyng / what
elles is it / than very vanyte :

Cap. v.

Whan thou goist into y house
of the lord / take good hede vnto
thy fete / & applye thy herte to
prayer

prayer and hearing of his worde:
 for this is moche better than the
 offeraunces of folysh men / which
 knowe nat what synne in so doig
 they comytte. Let nat thy tonge
 runne before thy mynde / neither
 thy herte to hasty to speke before
 god: for God is in heuen / & thou
 in erth / wherfor vse thou but few
 wordes. For lyke as moche study
 & care in the day engendre many
 dreames / so ar many wordes the
 very tokē of gret folyshnes. But
 & if thou promise any thyng vn-
 to god / pay it without delay. For
 soles please hi nat. If thou there-
 fore promisest hi / pay it him: For
 it is better nothyng to vow / thā
 neuer to performe thy vowe. Be
 ware therfore lest thy subtile to-
 gue wrappe thy fleshe in synne.
 Neither shalte thou thinke that
 thou

thou praeist or vowest before any
 aungell: for they knowe vs nat:
 but it is god whom thou makest
 angrie with prayng many wor-
 des & folysh vowe: whiche shal
 distroie all suche workes of their
 owne inuencion. Where are ma-
 ny dreames / there is moche vani-
 te & no lesse word. But thou ther-
 fore se that thou seruest & cleue to
 god. And if thou seest the poore
 afflicted / oppressed with wronge
 & both iugement & equite subuer-
 ted & violently plucked out of the
 erth / yet meruell thou nat gretly
 at this boldnes. For this oppres-
 sor / be he neuer so alofte / yet is
 there one higher thā he / obseruig
 and watchyng ouer him: & yet a-
 boue them both are there their su-
 perious to / ye / & ouer al these /
 yet is there the kynge of the holic
 lande

lande/ euen he/ whose tylling al
feldes obey. Who so loueth mo-
ney / shall neuer haue ynoughe.
And he that gapeth for rychesse /
shall neuer haue profyt of them:
and euen this is vanyte also. For
where is haboundance of ryches /
there ar many deuourers of the /
to eat them vpp: And what pro-
fyte lthan hath the possessoure of
them els/ than for a whyle to fede
his eyes with them: Swete is
the slepe y crepeth ouer the trow
labourer/ whether he eateth lytel
oz moch: but the ryche wealy / so
swetely to take his reste / surfets
shall nat suffre him. The mooste
greuouse plage / y I perceyued
to be vnder the sone / is a man to
possesse riches into his own deth
and vndoynge. For rychesse pe-
rissch nat with out the great afflic-
tion

tyon & tormētinge of their owne
possellour: which good wil both
slippe away fro him & his chylde
to: & as naked as euer they came
both out of theyr mothers wombe /
shal they retourne & go hence / no-
thing caryenge away of all their
heuy labours. This (I say) is y
moost myserable affliction / to re-
tourne (for al our carfull labour)
as naked as we cam. What thā p-
fyteth it mā thus i vaine wth his so
rowful labours / to bete y wide:
All dayes of his lyfe hath he spa-
red & lyued full miserably / etyng
but pozely / & that wth no lesse so-
rowe & care / thā angre & afflictio
of body & mide. Lo / me thiketh it
therfore best to eate & drinke & to
be mery in the myddes of these la-
bours / vntyl the ende of our lyfe
come which god hath apoynted.
For

For euen this is our porciō. And what so euer he be vnto whō the lord hath gyue riches & power / if he can in his labours ete & drinke with a mery hert / receiuyng it for his porcion: surely it is the very gyfte of god. For this man breketh nat his brayn / neither aboute the length of his lyfe / nor the incommodities therof / for that the lord thus replenisheth hys herte with ioye.

Cap. vi.

AD yet isther another comē misery vnto al mē vnder the sōne. If god gyue a mā riches / glozpe / & honour / & what so euer he can desyre: & yet he geueth him nat fre power to vse the but rather there shall come another vnknowē & spende the: whiche is no lesse vanite thā greuous affliction.

affliction. If a mā had an. C. children & lyued neuer so longe: sparing all this whiche his goodes from him selfe / & at last wanting a place to bury in his deede body: I wolde iuge y. chylde borne cast forth before the tyme better at ease than he. For this mā / as he is comē in / to be laughed at / so goeth he his way again vnder darkenes / his name buried i obliuio he seeth nomore the sōne / he synneth no rest nother here nor ther / he knoweth vs nat / although he had lyued two thousand yere / yet is his mynde vnquiet. Come nat al togyther vnto one place: Every mannes labour / is to fill his mouth: but his mide wyll neuer be satisfied. And what more hath the wyse than the fole? What helpeth it the poore / that he knoweth

weth wpsely to walke befoze the
me liuyng. It is better to se that
thyng which thou desirest / thā
to desyre that thou cānest nat get
And yet is this but vanite & mi-
sery. what is it / y there is now
borne. It is a man / whose mis-
ery his very name declareth. And
yet may he nat contende with hi
that so made hi / sith he excelleth
him in power. For if he so shuld
do / vanite shulde shew her selfe
ouercoinen of her own self. what
therfoze hath man of him self but
vanite & misery. who knoweth
what is most expediēt for man li-
uyng this lyfe of his vanite / whi-
che is like a shadowe. or who cā
tell a mā what shal folow hi vn-
der y sonne. Cap. vii.

Better is a good name / thā
Bright precious oyntmētes
And

And better is it to dye / than to be
borne. Better is it to go in to the
house of murnyng / thā of feastig.
For in that house every man ly-
uyng may cōsyder his ende. Bet-
ter is murnyng thā laughter / for
by murnyng the hert is correcte.
And therfoze / the wisemā's herte
is i the mournyng house. But cō-
trarywys the foles mynde is in
the house of mirth. It is more
holsome to heare the rebuke of y
wise / thā the swete musike of the
fole. For the dissolut laughter of
the fole. is lyke the crablinge of
thornes sodely set on fyer vnder
the pot / & this is also but vanite.
who so doth vnrigh / bereth soze
the wylse / & destroyeth the mylde
hert. Better is y ende of a thige /
than the begynnyng: & better is
the pacient & mylde spirite / than
the

Ecclesiastes. Cap. vii.

the high mynde pufte vp. Be nat
to heddy & sone angry: for wrath
resteth in foles bosoms. Thynke
nat with thy self / sayeng: howe
happeneth it / that y world / past
be better than the that nowe are:
for this is no wise question. wise
dome is good with rycheffe & her
itage / & profytable whyles thou
art here: For ryches with wyses
dom are a good buckler / but the
knowlege of that wysedome gy
ueth lyfe to hir possessour. Loke
vp vnto the workes of god: and
tell me who can make streight / y
he hath croked. In a good daye
be glad / but yet in the meane tyme
me obserue & wayte for the euyl
daye: For both be created of god
lest man shulde any other fynde.
I haue espyed many thiges in y
dayes of my vanyte. Here / the
iust

Ecclesiastes. Cap. vii.

iust perissheth to his owne well
doyng: & there / the wicked pro
spereth longe in his mischef. Be
nat therfore to iust nor to wyse /
lest thou thyself perissh also. Ne
ther be thou to wicked nor to for
lyshe / lest thou sodenly dyest an
euyl deeth. It is good for the / so
to holde y thing / that this slippe
nat out of thy handes: For who
so fereth god auoideth both these
perylles. Wysedome mynstreth
more strenght to the prudent / than
x. the mightiest men of the cyte:
And yet there is no man vpon the
erth / that doth good & synne nat.
Welcme nat all that me say. Gyue
nat eare to euery manes tale / lest
pauertie thou herest thyn own
seruaunt speke yll by the / For thou
knowest full well y thou thyselfe
often tymes also spekest yll by a
nothre

Ecclesiastes. . . . Cap. vii.
nother. Of al these maner thinges I haue had thozow wysedoe good experience. And than I thought/ I wyll be wyser: & here wisdom wēt farre fro me. She is now gone: & what thē? Depe & derke is the profoude secreete/ but who shall serche it? Than applied I my mynde to serche & fynde out wisdom & cōnyng: & to trye out the folyshnes of the vngodly & the mad errours of the fonde: & I founde that sith a woman is more better thā deth it self/ whose hert is both nette & snare/ & her hādes chaynes & bādes; but who so god fauoureth he shall escape her/ whan the synner shalbe tangled & taken with her. But lo/ at laste this thinge haue I founde (sayth this precher) This thinge and that I serched to fynd knowlege/

Ecclesiastes. . . . Cap. vii.
lege/ & yet cease I nat styll to en-
quyre/ although I fynde it nat.
Amonge a thousande men I can
skante fynde one profytable/ but
amonge so many women/ I fynde
none at all. But lo/ this one thig
haue I found/ that god in the be-
ginnig made man iust & vpight
but he with his posterite haue
entangled thē selues with moche
crafte & insynpte questions. But
who is so wyse an interpretoure
as to expowne and aswoyle these
thinges? Cap. viii.

Wisdom maketh freshe & a-
mountable/ & cleareth a mannes
countenance: but the angry
vncircumspect is odious w^out
grace. waite diligētly vpoⁿ y^e kys
mouth to do his cōmādementes.
obserue & take hede vnto thy oth
made vnto hī/ for he is called god
with

withdraw nat thy selfe lone out of
his sight/nether enserch thou nat
his dede/ nor whether he com iust
ly vnto his kigdom. For he doth
what it pleaseth him. The wordes
of kinges are mighty & full of
maiestye: & who is he y dare say
vnto hi/ what doest thou: who so
obeyeth his precept shall haue no
harme. The hert of y wyse saith
a dew tyme for euery thing to be
done/ & attēperith hyselke vnto oꝝ
poxtunite: for euery thinge hath
his tyme cōuenient. But y cala
myte of me in the meane tyme is
right greuous & gret/ & manifolde
is his misery: for what thin
ges be past he knoweth nat: and
what is to com vpon hi/ who can
tel hi: It is nat in mānes power
neither to lyue nor dye/ he cā nat
holde i his bzeth/ neither is it in
his

his power to a voyd deth/nether
hath he fre wyll to escew oꝝ shake
of his crosse: no / nat his owne
vngodlynes thā may nat deliuer
the vngodly. All these thinges I
marked/ applyeng my mynde di
lygently to expende all thynges
done vnder the sōne. And I per
ceyued one mā ofte hauing domi
nion ouer another into his owne
distructyd. Also here I sawe cer
tayne vngodly lately buried/ whi
che were esteemed right holy/ and
yet of all the cyte were they clene
forgotten: noman nat once remē
bering that euer there were any
suche: whiche all is but very va
nyte. Bycause that iugement &
payne foloweth nat a none men
nes vngodly dedes/ therfore is y
synfull hert of man contynually
more prone & redy to couple one
C myse

Ecclesiastes. Cap. viii.
myschefe to a nother. Although
the vngodly commytte neuer so
moch synne / heapinge one synne
vpon a nother an hundred folde /
and hath here full longe lyfe : yet
am I sure that they shall be blest
sed that cleue to god / & fere his
face : whan the vngodlye whiche
fere nat god / shalbe punysshed /
their lyfe vanysshing away lyke
a shadow. Ouer this / yet espied
I another gret vanyte i the erth
I sawe many iuste men plaged
as the euill / and punysshed / as
though they commytted euen the
dedes of the vngodly. And con-
trary wyse. I sawe the vngodly
prosperre in all thing / as though
they had lyue as well as y godly
& I sayd anone. And euē this is
but vanyte : wherfore at laste I
prayed a glad minde / and iuged
nothig

Ecclesiastes. Cap. viii.
nothig better for mā in this worl
de / than to ete & drynke with ho-
nest mirth in his labours / while
he lyue / enioyeng this gladnesse
as the gyft of god / and so vsyng
it vnder the sonne. Furthermore
I endeouored my selfe wysely to
beholde the carefull and mysera-
ble labours vpon the erthe. And
I sawe some / often tymes / daye
noz nyght taking their rest. I lo-
ked vpon the meruelous workes
of god : and I perceyued that of
all the workes of god vnder the
sonne / no man can serche out the
cause noz gyue any rekenyngc :
but that the more feruent he is to
serche / the lesse he fyndeth. Al-
though he thinke him selfe wyse
to know it / yet shal he knowe hi
self at last nothing at all / neither
to knowe noz finde. **Cap. ix.**
C. ii. All

A these reuolued with my
 selfe / yet I endeouored to
 serche further. And I foude that
 there be both iust & wysse vnto
 their dedes to serue them: & al ar
 in the hāde of god: but yet is ther
 no man that knoweth whom he /
 amōge other / other loueth or ha-
 teth: For it chaūseth a lyke / both
 to the wicked & good / to the pure
 & vnpure / both to the offerer & to
 him that offereth nat. It happen-
 eth to the good / as it doth to sin-
 ners / to the periured / as to the
 true swerer. Which thig / that is
 to wytte / that all thynges indyffe-
 rently come as well to the one /
 as to y tother / is the worst of all
 that ar vnder the sōne. Wherefore
 mānes hert swelleth in malyce / &
 conynueth in his own fōde mad-
 nes / vnto his graue. Whyle men
 are

ar a lyue / they thynke them selfe
 sure (for a dogge a lyue / is better
 than a lyon dead) And yet they
 know that they must dye: But y
 dead / they know it nat / nether de-
 serue they any more. for their me-
 morial is buryed / so that they be
 to no mā any further occasion / ei-
 ther of loue / euy / or hatered / ney-
 ther haue any pte more i y world
 of any thig vnder the sōne. wher-
 fore go & ete thy breed with ioye /
 & drinke thy wyne with myzthe:
 For god is well pleased with thy
 worke. Se therfore that thy clo-
 thes be euermore whyte / and thy
 heed neuer with out oyntmētes /
 (that is / be euer glad & ioyous)
 Lede thy life iocūdely w^t thy be-
 loued wyfe / while thou art here i
 this vayne worlde / as longe as
 god wyl suffre y: For thys is thy
 porty

porcion both of thy life & labour/
 whiche god hath gyue the vnder
 the sonne. What so euer good be
 de is offred vnto thy hande/do it
 constātly/spedely/& boldely: for
 in thy graue/vnto whiche thou
 art bent to descende / there is no
 thinge to do: there is neither eru
 dition / cōninge / knowlege / nor
 wysedom.ouer this / yet I tur
 ned me to se how all thinges we
 re done vnder the sonne. And I
 espied y a man to hasty & swyfte/
 was nothyng apte to rōne / nor
 strength helped nat in batail: nor
 circūspecte pūision for food & wi
 ning: neither yet sharpe wylines
 to helpe so haue riches: neither
 coude cōninge bringe a man into
 fauour: but that al this depēdeth
 of time & fortune. Al mā knoweth
 nomore his time of deth than the
 fyfthe

fyfthe of her takynge w^t the hoke
 or birde of her snare / so sodenly
 cometh deth vpon mā & taketh hi
 at his time. Also I cōsydered wy
 scly yet another thinge vnder the
 sonne / & me thought it no small
 wysedom. I saw a cite/ nat very
 gret nor yet full of people / & yet
 was there a kinge of no smal pui
 saūce besegig it & castyng vp bul
 werkes & bankes against it. In
 which cite there was a certain si
 ple pore wyle man/by whose wis
 dom the lytle cite might haue be
 defended & delyuered frō their en
 mies: but no mā regarded him: &
 here a nō iuged I / wisdom to be
 better than strēgth. Natwithstā
 ding yet was this pore mannes
 wysdom neglected/no mā in the
 cite heryng hi. wherfore / y wor
 des of y wise ar of more weight/
 altho

although they be softly spoken
than the lowde noyse of an vnwi-
se prince. Wherfore wysedom is
better thā all their armour & har-
nes. And one ydle vnthristy man
troubleth many good mē/no no-
ther wayes / thā the lytell lyghte
flye mareth all the swetnes of the
preciousse oyntmēt. Follyshnesse
somtyme is better thā wysedom
& honour. The herte of the wyse
is in his right hande: but the fo-
les hert is in his lyfthande. The
fole / do he his owne dedes neuer
so follyshly hi selfe / yet thynketh
he all other to be but foles. if any
stronge furioseffecte cometh o-
uer the / for nat hauing thyn own
will yet be nat moued. For to suf-
fer & sōtyme to leaue of thyn own
wyl / represseth & styllleth moche
hurte and losse. Cap. x.

And

And yet is there another mise-
rable calamyte vnder the sonne/
that is to wyt / y gret ouersyght
of rulers in pmoung & settinge
vp foles in gret honours & digni-
te / suffering the riche i wysedome
to sit styll in the dust. I saw sla-
ues ryde gloriously vpo palfres /
& mē worthy to be pricely rulers
go on fote lyke seruātes. He that
byggeth vp the pit shall him self
fall into it. He that breketh vp y
old rotten hedge shalbe first biten
of the edder. Who so rolleth y sto-
ne shalbe most wery. And he that
cleueth wode shall katche sonest
harne of it. The blonter the axe
is / y more labour it asketh to be
made sharpe. Thus doth wyse-
dom folow experience. A sedici-
ous secreete tale bearer with his
backbiting is as euyl as y edder
that sodenly stingeth er she hille.

The tōge of the wise hath a gret grace: but ȳ foles lippes deuoure him self. For the begynning of his speche is folishnes / & thende is perylous & fonde madnesse. A fole maketh many wordes: & no man cā perceiue neither tale nor head of his tale. The inforccmentes of foles prosper nat / bycause they can nat go the right way in to the cite. Wo be to ȳ lande whose kinge is but a childe / & whose rulers ete erly. But happy is ȳ lande whose kinge is clere & strōge / & whose rulers ete nat to erly & that for their bodely sustinance & nat to paumpere their lustes. For thow we ignaue and slewe the beemes of ȳ house synke downe: & thow ydle handes it rayneth thow ȳ house rose. They prepare theyr mete vnto pleasure and laughter / & make their wyne

to make mery the lyuinge: vnto whose noughtynes / money must minstre all thyng. Cōspyre nat / nor thinke thou non euyl agēst ȳ king / nor say no hurt agēst the ryche / no / nat i thy secret chābre: for the foules of the ayre wil cary them the voīce of thy wordes / & wynged messengers wyll vtter thy thoughtes. Cap. xi.

Of liberall almyes this is spokē
Qaste forth thy brede vpon the ouerflowing waters / and thou shalt fynde it agayn in tyme to come. Deale it amonge seven & eight / for thou knowest nat what darth & calamyte shall fall vpon the erthe. If the cloudes be full / they powre downe rayne vpon the erthe. If the tree be cut downe / where so euer it falleth / whether it be toward ȳ south or agēst the north / there lieth it styll.

Who so curiously obserueth and
wayteth vpon the wynde / he shall
neuer sowe: Neither shall he ne-
uer reape that fereth the cloudes.
As thou neither knowest y waye
of the winde. nor the iointes knit-
ting togider the bones in the mo-
thers wōbe: so maist thou nat ser-
che out y werk of god cuer whe-
re so diuersely wrought. Sowe
thy seaderly / neither let thy hāde
cease at euen: for thou canste nat
tell whether in this tyme or that
which shal take: & if what is sow-
ne at both times take / it is so mo-
che the better. The light is plea-
saunt / & iocunde is it to se the sōne
Lyue a mā neuer so longe in cōti-
nuall mirth: yet hath he left him
this corraspe / to consyder y his
best dayes be past & the lenger he
lyueth y more labour & misery a-
bideth hi / which al is but vanite.

Bemery therfor (yōge mā)
in thy yough / and take a
glad hert vnto the while thou art
lusty / take thy pleasure accordig
to thy minde: but yet shalte thou
well know / that for all these thin-
ges / god will call the vnto iuge-
mēt. Wrath & heuynes / put them
ferre frō thy hert / & cōuaye disea-
ses from thy body / and yet is thy
childhed & yough both but vani-
te. Remēbre thy maker therfore
in thy yough before those heuy
carefull calamitouse dayes come:
wher in for thy wofull age thou
shalt say: These dayes please me
nothyng. Remēbre thy maker (I
say) erth / sonne / the dayes / mōne
& starres / be made derke / and the
swete showers past / y heuy clou-
des be retourned / euen the tyme
whan the keepers of y house shal
tremble & quake & the strōge shal

stoupe & crepe away / & myllers
shall stande ydle / bycause there
shalbe so fewe : and the eye wynd
dowes shalbe shut vp with y do
re of derkenes / whā the gates of
the stretes shalbe locked vp / and
the myllers voyce made small &
saite / & shalbe awake at the sōge
of the byrde / whā all the dought
ters of musyke be wakenedesse / &
thou going forth shall tremble &
stay at the high stōbelyng block
in the way : whā the Allmande tre
shall flourish / & the locust laden
with many cares enclyueth to y
groude / al pleasure fayling him.
For euen hitherwards goth mā /
perpetually there to dwell : and
the murners shal go about i the
stretes. Remembre (I saye) thy
maker / before the syluer lyne be
taken awaye / and the golden vp
sprynges be sonke downe / & the

bucket of the well catche ristes /
and the well wheelcs be broken :
For dust must retourne and be re
solued in to erth / as it was in the
begynning : But the spiryte shall
tourne in to god agayne whiche
gaue it. All thinges are nat elles
than vanyte (sayde the precher)
ye / euen very vanyte.

¶ This precher & autout of this
lytell boke / excellynge nat onely
in wysdom / but also in teching y
people knowlege and vnderstan
ding of thinges : Consydered &
serched out euery thyng / & com
pyled many sēcences. He studyed
also dilygently to fynde out pro
fyttable and pure speche / with no
lesse grace than eloquēce / & wrot
the very worde of trewthe frely.
These wordes of y wise beig bo
th spear & stinge / were gathered
and

Ecclesiastes. **Cap. xli.**
and wryten by the comē maisters
⁊ rulers / endyted ⁊ delyuered of
a certayn pastour ⁊ precher. We
ware therfore (my sonne) of any
other many word; mo. For there
is neither mesure nor ende i wry-
tyng boke. And many prechers
diuersely ⁊ to oft prechige to the
people / ar but tediousse vnto the ⁊
wery the. Nowe therfore let vs
here y bryef cōclusion of all. Fere
god ⁊ kepe his cōmandementes.
For this belongeth al alike vnto
euery mā. For god shal cal all y
dedes of euery mortall man in to
iugemēt / ⁊ shal reuele ⁊ lay open
all their secretes bothe good and
badde. **Finis.**

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